



# *Milwaukee County*

Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Chairman, Intergovernmental Relations Committee

Supervisor David Bowen, 10<sup>th</sup> District

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## **COUNTY BOARD APPROVES LAUNCH OF READY TO WORK INITIATIVE**

*Contract with BIG STEP/WRTP will help develop skilled workforce*

**Milwaukee, WI** –Supervisors Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., and David Bowen are thanking their colleagues on the County Board for today’s overwhelming support of the [Biddle-Lipscomb Ready to Work Initiative](#). Ready to Work (R2W), authored in 2011 by Supervisor Lipscomb and then-Supervisor Eyon Biddle, Sr., aims to connect residents who are ready to work with job opportunities by ensuring they have the needed qualifications and skills. R2W focuses on Milwaukee County residents who have demonstrated prior success such as attaining a high school diploma or GED and maintaining a valid driver’s license, yet are still unable to secure family supporting jobs.

The Board today approved a contract with BIG STEP and the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) to provide outreach, screening, educational training and on-the-job work experience.

“Our partnership with WRTP/BIG STEP will help us to put Milwaukee County residents, including minorities and women, to work in both public and private positions, where they can begin to climb a career ladder,” Supervisor Lipscomb said. “A well-trained workforce is a benefit to both the employee and their employer. This initiative will benefit our neighborhoods and stimulate the local economy.”

The 2012 County Budget designated \$1,000,000 of land sales revenue to establish the R2W Initiative. The funds were made available following a land sale in the former Park East corridor. The initiative will leverage at least another \$1,000,000 over the 18-month project. R2W is projected to place more than 500 residents in jobs and help hundreds more to get on a path to employment. The contract with WRTP/BIG STEP was negotiated with the assistance of Corporation Counsel and the Economic Development Director to establish the program goals, budget and reporting requirements, which are designed to ensure effectiveness.

“In a city with 55% black male joblessness, I’m pleased this initiative will provide opportunity, access and hope to those who are Ready to Work,” former Supervisor Biddle added, “I thank the County Board for seeing this through and to Supervisors Lipscomb and Bowen for pushing the needle to get this to the finish line in my absence.”

“Today marks a win for all residents of Milwaukee County, and I thank my predecessor, Eyon Biddle and my colleague, Supervisor Lipscomb, for their innovation and persistence to move this forward,” Supervisor Bowen said. “I’m glad the County Board approved today’s resolution, and I strongly encourage the County Executive to sign it without any further delay.”

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